

REMARKS

In the Office Action mailed May 20, 2004, claims 10, 11, 13-15, and 17-20 were rejected under 35 USC § 103(a) as being unpatentable over the "admitted prior art" in view of Lacour (U.S. Patent No. 5,891,279), Suris (U.S. Patent No. 4,305,444), Drieux, et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,634,993), French (U.S. Patent No. 5,885,383), British Patent Specification 283,660, Kraft (U.S. Patent No. 2,427,216), Macklin (U.S. Patent No. 1,566,028), Japanese Patent Application 62-275802, German Patent Application L 20502 II/63b, Japanese Patent Application 5-169901, Harrington, et al. (U.S. Patent No. 4,269,251), and French, et al. (U.S. Patent No. 4,148,348). With the exception of the "admitted prior art" and Lacour, the references will be referred to in this Amendment as the "old references." Applicants make no admission as to what is referred to in the Office Action of May 20, 2004, as "admitted prior art" as actually prior art either wholly or in part or et al.

Claims 1 and 7-9 were allowed in the Office Action mailed May 20, 2004.

In the present Amendment, Applicants have amended claims 10 and 20 in order to call for grit to be disposed around the entire circumference of at least one of the first and second bead seats. This structure was indicated as allowable subject matter in the Office Action of May 20, 2004. As such, Applicants respectfully submit that claims 10 and 20 define over the combination of the "admitted prior art" and Lacour and the "old references." Further, Applicants respectfully submit that all claims depending from claim 10 (claims 17-19) are also in condition for allowance, their rejections being made moot due to the allowance of claim 10.

Applicants respectfully submit that all claims are allowable and that the application is in condition for allowance. Favorable action thereon is respectfully requested.

Applicants will amend the withdrawn claims, if necessary, to incorporate the allowable subject matter of claim 1 once the withdrawn claims are rejoined.

The Examiner is encouraged to contact the undersigned at her convenience to resolve any remaining issues.

Respectfully submitted,

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Date

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